

MSC-14—PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLANDS

NOAA WEATHER RADIO BROADCASTS

CITY	STATION	FREQUENCY	BROADCAST TIMES
1. San Juan, PR	WXJ-69	162.40 MHz	Continuously, 24 hrs a day
2. Maricao, PR	WXJ-68	162.55 MHz	Continuously, 24 hrs a day
3. St. Thomas, V.I.	WXM-96	162.475 MHz	Continuously, 24 hrs a day

These VHF-FM radio stations (1 AND 2), locations shown on the map, are managed by the National Weather Service. VHF-FM radio station 3, shown on map, is a cooperative N.W.R. station. Broadcast tapes are updated frequently and amended as required.

The contents vary, but in general contain the following information:

1. Special bulletins and statements concerning hurricanes or other severe weather.
2. Forecasts and warnings for nearby coastal areas.
3. Forecasts for local areas.
4. Description of weather patterns affecting the region.
5. Tide and sunrise-sunset data.
6. Daily climatology.
7. Short-term forecasts.
8. Other information as available.

BROADCASTS OF MARINE WEATHER FORECASTS AND WARNINGS BY MARINE RADIOTELEPHONE STATIONS

CITY	STATION	FREQUENCY (kHz)	BROADCAST TIMES
San Juan, PR	NMR-1 (USCG)	157.1 MHz (ch. 22)	1210, 2210 GMT
Portsmouth, VA	SSBHF	2670	0305, 1505 GMT
	NMN	4428.7	0400, 0530, 1000 GMT
		6506.4	
		8765.4	
		6506.4	1130, 2330, 1600 GMT
		8765.4	
		13113.2	
		8765.4	1730 GMT
		13113.2	
	Navtex (RADIOTELETYPE PRINTER)	17307.3	
San Juan, PR	NMR-1	518	0200, 0600, 1000, 1400, 1800, 2200 GMT

SPECIAL BROADCASTS OF WARNING AND FORECAST MESSAGES

City	Station	Freq. (kHz)	Broadcast times
Charlotte Amalie	WAH	401 - 4357 KHz	6:00 am, 2:00 pm, 10:00 pm
St. Thomas, V.I.		604 - 6510 KHz	
		804 - 8728 KHz	
		VHF CH85 - 161.875 MHz	8:00 am and pm
San Juan, PR	NMR-1 (USCG)	157.1 MHz (ch. 22)*	

*Preceded by announcement on 156.8 MHz (ch. 16)

AM AND FM RADIO STATIONS BROADCASTING MARINE WEATHER FORECASTS AND WARNINGS

City	Station	Freq. AM/FM kHz/MHz
Bayamon, PR	WLJZ	1600
Bayamon, PR	WRSJ-FM	100.7
San Juan, PR	WBMJ	1190
San Juan, PR	WOSO*	1030
San Juan, PR	WFOA	870
San Juan, PR	WKYM	810
San Juan, PR	WQBS	630
San Juan, PR	WKAQ	580

Note: Not all broadcasts are in English.

Aguadilla, PR	WABA	850
	WVAFM	100.3
Arecibo, PR	WCAN	1280
Caguas, PR	WPRM-FM	98.5
Cayey, PR	WLEY	1080
Camuy, PR	WCHQ	1360
	WCHQ-FM	102.9
Fajardo, PR	WMDD	1480
	WMDD-FM	96.5
Humacao, PR	WALO	1240
Isabela, PR	WISA	1390
	WISA-FM	101.5
Mayaguez, PR	WKJB	710
	WKJB-FM	99.1
Mayaguez, PR	WORA	760
	WORA-FM	97.5
Mayaguez, PR	WTL	1300
	WOYE-FM	94.1
Ponce, PR	WISO	1260
Ponce, PR	WLEO	1170
Ponce, PR	WEUC	1420
San German, PR	WRSQ	1090
San Juan, PR	WIPR	940
	WIPR-FM	91.3
San Sebastian, PR	WFBA	1460
Utado, PR	WUPR	1530
	WUPR-FM	104.1
Viesques Island, PR	WVVV	1370
Yauco, PR	WKFE	1550

St. Thomas, V.I.	Weatherline phone # 774-4786	
Charlotte Amalie,	WGOD	1090
Charlotte Amalie,	WSTA	1340
Charlotte Amalie,	WVVI*	1000

* English only broadcasts

ANCHORAGES

Under ordinary conditions the first requirement for anchorage is shelter from the easterly trade winds. Anchorages in Puerto Rico are numerous except along the north coast. Strong northeasterly winds and heavy seas may occur from November to April. During the hurricane season strong winds may strike from any direction. The best hurricane harbors are the Bays (Bahias) of San Juan, Guanica, Guayanilla, Jobos, Salinas and Puerto Real, Cabo Rojo, Ensenada Honda on Culebra Island, and Coral Bay, St. John.

WIND

One of the most outstanding features of the wind in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands is the steadiness of the trade winds. They typically blow, with few and brief exceptions, from an easterly direction, i.e., between northeast and southeast. Local effects caused by these winds flowing around and over the mountainous terrain of the local islands can produce wind and sea conditions differing significantly from those conditions otherwise prevailing across the region. These varying conditions can often be found in the local passes and channels, both large and small, between the numerous islands. Wind across the open waters does not vary between night and day, while across the near shore and protected waters it can vary greatly. Significantly lighter wind and smoother seas are generally found from the early morning hours through one or two hours after sunrise across protected and near shore waters, with the wind gradually increasing to the prevailing off shore conditions by late morning. This cycle then begins to repeat itself after sunset, with near shore wind gradually diminishing through the early morning hours. Also, the prevailing trade wind flow can become enhanced or increased, due to daytime heating, along the coastlines parallel to the this flow, i.e., usually the north and south coasts. This phenomenon is most evident during the warmest days and months of the year and occurs predominantly along the coasts of the larger islands of Puerto Rico and St. Croix.

Wind speeds across the open waters average about 13 to 15 knots during the Winter and Spring months and slightly less during the remainder of the year. However, migratory high pressure systems building off the east and southeast coast of the U.S. behind cold fronts during the Winter and Spring can produce sustained winds of 20 to 30 knots that may endure for several days. These wind patterns are usually maximized during the Winter from December through March. Gale force winds are rare across the area and winds of this strength and greater may be found during the Summer and early Fall season when they may accompany passing hurricanes, tropical storms, or strong tropical waves.

WEATHER RULES FOR SAFE BOATING

Before setting out:

Obtain the latest available weather forecast for the boating area. The NOAA Weather Radio continuous broadcasts (VHF-FM) are the best way to keep informed of expected weather and sea conditions. If you hear on the radio that warnings are in effect, don't venture out on the water unless you are confident that your boat can be navigated safely under forecast conditions of wind and sea.

While afloat:

1. Keep a weather eye out for: the approach of dark, threatening clouds, which may foretell a squall or thunderstorm; any steady increase in wind or sea; any increase in wind velocity opposite in direction to a strong tidal current. A dangerous rip tide condition may form steep waves capable of broaching a boat.
2. Check radio weather broadcasts for the latest forecasts and warnings.
3. Heavy static on your AM radio may be an indication of nearby thunderstorm activity.
4. If a thunderstorm catches you while afloat, you should remember that not only gusty winds but also lightning pose a threat to safety.
 - stay below deck if possible.
 - keep away from metal objects that are not grounded to the boat's protection system.
 - don't touch more than one grounded object at the same time (or you may become a shortcut for electrical surges passing through the protection system).
 - put on a life jacket and prepare for rough sea conditions.
5. Waterspouts are common across the Northeastern Caribbean. If you observe a waterspout, do not try to outrun it. Steer perpendicular to it and away from its direction of movement.

RADIO WWW/WWVH STORM INFORMATION BROADCASTS

HIGH SEAS STORM INFORMATION for the North Atlantic and North Pacific is provided mariners through a cooperative program of two Department of Commerce agencies: National Weather Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Bulletins are compiled by the National Weather Service and broadcast every hour by the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Frequency and Time Broadcast Services Radio Stations - WWW, Fort Collins, Colorado and WWVH, Kauai, Hawaii. These are the stations that sailors and others listen to for daily time checks.

WWW (FORT COLLINS, CO)
FREQUENCIES: 2.5, 5, 10, 15, 20 MHz

The weather broadcast is in 45-second segments separated by a 15-second interval.

TIMES OF BROADCAST

8 minutes past the hour
9 minutes past the hour

BROADCAST AREA

Storm information for western North Atlantic, including Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea.

OTHER MARINE WEATHER SERVICES CHARTS AVAILABLE

MSC-1 Eastport, ME to Montauk Point, NY
MSC-2 Montauk Point, NY to Manassquan, NJ
MSC-3 Manassquan, NJ to Cape Hatteras, NC
MSC-4 Cape Hatteras, NC to Savannah, GA
MSC-5 Savannah, GA to Apalachicola, FL
MSC-6 Apalachicola, FL to Morgan City, LA
MSC-7 Morgan City, LA to Brownsville, TX
MSC-8 Mexican Border to Point Conception, CA
MSC-9 Point Conception, CA to Point St. George, CA
MSC-10 Point St. George, CA to Canadian Border
MSC-11/12 Great Lakes
MSC-13 Hawaiian Waters
MSC-14 Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands
MSC-15 Alaskan Waters
MSC-16 Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands

Copies of these charts are available for \$1.25 each from:

National Ocean Service
Distribution Division (N/ACC33)
Riverdale, MD 20737
Telephone: 1-(800)-638-8972

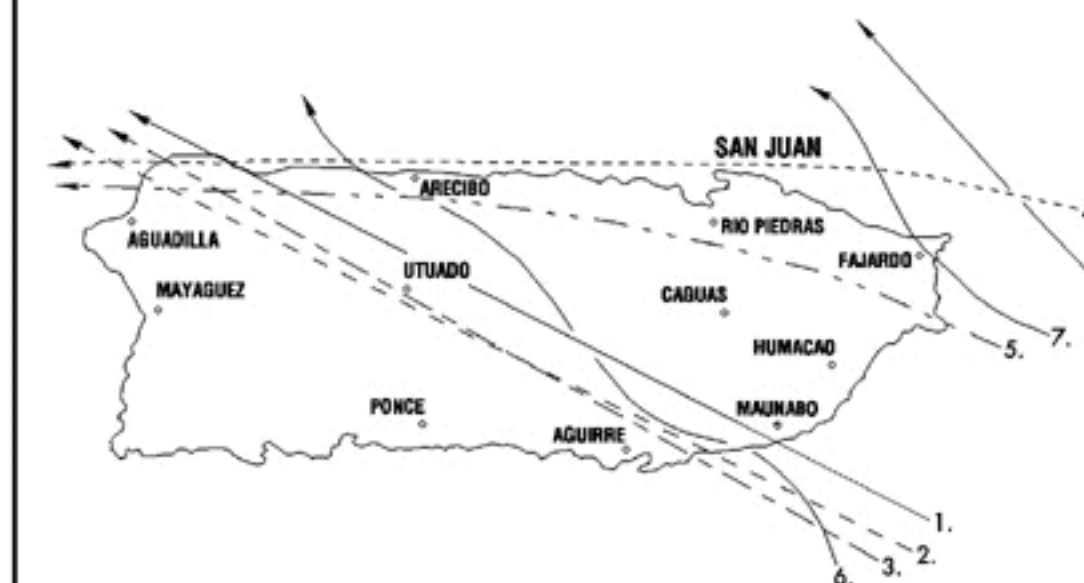
Nautical charts for navigation purposes for these coastal areas are available from local marinas, marine supply stores, and the above address.

TROPICAL CYCLONES

Hurricanes and tropical storms are an important feature of Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands climate during Summer and early Autumn. The tropical cyclone season in the North Atlantic region extends from June through November. Because of seasonal shifts in favored locations of tropical cyclone development, the Puerto Rico-Virgin Islands area is outside the main paths of these most severe tropical atmospheric disturbances, except from August through the first half of October. A few "off-season" tropical cyclones have, however, slightly "brushed" the area at infrequent intervals.

Those hurricanes and tropical storms which do severely affect Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands develop over the waters of the southern North Atlantic to the east of the Lesser Antilles. The movements of the storms are usually towards the west and northwest.

The map below shows the paths of the more severe hurricanes which have passed directly over Puerto Rico since 1893.



Local Name	Dates	Fatalities	Damage	Maximum Wind in San Juan
1. San Rogue	August 16-17, 1893	4	-	-
2. San Ciriaco	August 8, 1899	3,000	\$20 million	75 m.p.h.
3. San Felipe	September 13, 1928	300	\$50 million	160 m.p.h.
4. San Nicholas	September 10-11, 1931	2	\$200 thousand	90 m.p.h.
5. San Ciprian	September 26-27, 1932	225	\$30 million	120 m.p.h.
6. Santa Clara (Betsy)	August 12, 1956	11	\$40 million	90 m.p.h.
7. Hugo	September 17-18, 1989	0	\$2 billion	77 m.p.h.
8. Marilyn (U.S.V.I.)	September 15-16, 1995	8	\$2.1 billion	129 m.p.h.

INTERNET ADDRESSES

National Weather Service Current Weather Data
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov>

National Data Buoy Center
<http://seaboard.ndbc.noaa.gov>

U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center
<http://www.navcen.uscg.mil>

National Weather Service Southern Region Headquarters
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov>

National Weather Service Puerto Rico - Virgin Islands Forecast Office
<http://www.upr.cu.edu/nws>

MARINE RADIOFACSIMILE CHARTS THROUGH E-MAIL

National Weather Service radiofax charts broadcast by the U.S. Coast Guard from New Orleans, LA, are available via E-mail. It is anticipated that the service will include marine text products in the near future. This allows Internet access for mariners who do not have direct access to the World Wide Web, but who are equipped with an E-mail system. Users can request files from NWS and have them automatically Emailed back to them. To get started, send an E-mail to:

Address: ftpmail@weather.noaa.gov
Subject: (not required)
Body: help

Direct any questions to 301-713-1677, extension 128, or 301-713-0882, extension 122.

ACAB, APRIL 1998